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# AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS Canberra

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## JOB VACANCIES, FEBRUARY 1978

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### INQUIRIES

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### MAIN FEATURES

- At the end of February 1978 the estimated number of job vacancies in Australia, as measured by the quarterly survey, was 36,000, about the same as in November 1977. (See paragraphs 3 and 4.)
- 38 per cent of vacancies were for males and 19 per cent for females.
- The proportion open to either males or females continued to increase (to 43 per cent).

### Introduction

Sample surveys of employers are conducted quarterly throughout Australia in February, May, August and November to obtain information about job vacancies. The first quarterly survey was conducted in May 1977. A larger sample survey is conducted annually in March. This bulletin contains estimates of the number of job vacancies on 24 February 1978 and some comparative figures for earlier periods.

2. Particulars of the scope of the quarterly surveys, definitions of terms used, etc. are given below. The background and methodology of the series are described in *Job Vacancies, May 1977*, (6231.0).

### Scope and Coverage

3. Because of limitations in scope and coverage, the survey results do not give estimates of the total number of job vacancies in Australia.

4. The surveys cover vacancies in private employment and in Australian, State and local government employment. All vacancies for wage and salary earners are included except those:

- in the defence forces
- in agriculture
- in private households employing staff
- for waterside workers employed on a casual basis, and
- for employees of private employers (other than hospitals) not subject to payroll tax.

5. Included in the survey results are vacancies for all categories of employees, including managerial, full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary and seasonal employees; and adults, juniors, trainees, apprentices, cadets, etc. Excluded are vacancies about to be filled by

persons already hired, by promotion or transfer of existing employees, or by employees returning from paid or unpaid leave or after industrial disputes. Also excluded are vacancies that were not immediately available for filling on the survey date, that is, those that became available after the specified date, and vacancies for work to be done under contract, such as by building sub-contractors, owner-drivers, etc.

### Sample Design for Quarterly Surveys

6. Respondents included in the surveys are selected from lists of private and government employers stratified by State, industry and number of employees. Employers with 1,200 or more employees are fully enumerated and a sample is selected from the remainder of employers. The total number of employers in the survey was about 2,800 in February 1978.

### Definitions

7. A *job vacancy* was defined as a job immediately available for filling on the survey date and for which active steps were being taken by the employer to find or recruit an employee from outside the enterprise or authority in the particular State or Territory. Active steps to find or recruit an employee included efforts to fill vacancies by advertising, by factory notices, by notifying government or private employment agencies or trade unions and by contacting, interviewing or selecting applicants already registered with the enterprise or authority.

8. *Vacancies for males or females* are those jobs open to male or female applicants without preference.

9. The *job vacancy rate* is calculated by expressing the number of job vacancies as a percentage of the number of employees plus vacancies.

### Reliability of the Estimates

10. Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from a sample of employers, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if the information had been obtained from all employers. One measure of the likely difference is given by the *standard error*, which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of employers was included in the survey. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all employers had been included and about nineteen

chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

11. Relative standard errors of estimates in this bulletin are less than 20 per cent except where indicated. Estimates with relative standard errors of 30 per cent and over are not shown. Approximate percentage standard errors of estimates of total vacancies for each State and Territory and for Australia in February are: New South Wales 8.2; Victoria 9.5; Queensland 7.4; South Australia 14.3; Western Australia 10.9; Tasmania 14.3; Northern Territory 9.3; Australian Capital Territory 8.2 and Australia 4.6. Thus there are, for example, about two chances in three that the true figure for the number of job vacancies shown for Australia in February 1978 was within the range 34,400 to 37,600 (i.e.  $36,000 \pm 4.6$  per cent of 36,000).

#### Quarterly and Annual Survey Estimates

12. Owing to differences in sample size and survey methodology, and because of possible seasonal influences (see paragraph 13), comparisons with results of the annual job vacancy surveys conducted in March should be made with caution. Estimates for March 1977 are shown in *Job Vacancies, March 1977* (6218.0).

#### Seasonal Factors

13. Comparison of job vacancy figures at different dates may be affected by seasonal influences. This should be kept in mind when comparing current estimates with those for earlier periods. Seasonal adjustment of the quarterly job vacancy series will not be possible for some considerable time.

#### Comparability with Commonwealth Employment Service Statistics

14. For a number of reasons the estimates obtained from the surveys differ from the number of vacancies registered with the Commonwealth

Employment Service (CES). The principal reason is that, because notification of vacancies is voluntary, many vacancies are not registered with the CES. Other reasons are:

- (a) the survey estimates relate to vacancies immediately available for filling on the survey date, whereas the CES statistics relate to vacancies which were unfilled at the Friday nearest the end of the month and which employers claimed could be filled if labour were supplied immediately or within the following month.
- (b) the coverage of the job vacancy surveys is somewhat restricted (see paragraphs 3–5) and the results are subject to sampling variability (See paragraphs 10 and 11).
- (c) the CES figures may include some vacancies already filled or cancelled by the date at which the figures are compiled, but about which the CES may not have been notified.

#### Related Publications

15. Users may also wish to refer to the following publications which are available on request :

*Unemployment (Preliminary Estimates)* (6201.0)  
*The Labour Force (Preliminary)* (6202.0)  
*The Labour Force* (6203.0)  
*Employment and Unemployment* (6213.0).

16. All publications produced by the ABS are listed in *Catalogue of Publications 1977* (1101.0).

NOTE: Any discrepancies between totals and sums of components in tables are due to rounding.

**R. J. CAMERON**  
 Australian Statistician

**JOB VACANCIES AND JOB VACANCY RATES (a) – MAY, AUGUST AND NOVEMBER 1977 AND FEBRUARY 1978**

Month	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Australia	
JOB VACANCIES (b)										
	Number ('000)									Per cent of total
For males –										
1977 –										
May	5.0	6.6	(e)2.1	(e)1.3	2.0	(e)0.9	*	*	18.6	47.3
August	6.4	6.2	3.1	0.9	2.0	0.6	(e)0.2	*	19.7	48.1
November	5.0	6.8	1.2	0.7	2.1	(e)0.7	0.1	*	16.7	45.9
1978 –										
February	4.8	5.3	0.9	0.7	1.2	0.5	(e)0.1	0.1	13.6	37.8
For females –										
1977 –										
May	2.5	(e)3.5	(e)0.8	(e)0.4	(e)0.5	0.2	*	*	8.1	20.6
August	(e)2.8	2.8	0.4	*	(e)0.6	*	†	0.1	7.6	18.5
November	2.1	1.7	0.4	(e)0.3	0.3	*	†	0.1	5.3	14.7
1978 –										
February	2.4	2.4	(e)0.6	(e)0.3	(e)0.4	*	†	*	6.8	18.9
For males or females –										
1977 –										
May	2.8	(e)4.3	1.7	1.1	0.4	(e)0.3	0.3	1.7	12.6	32.1
August	3.1	5.3	1.2	1.3	0.5	*	0.3	1.8	13.8	33.7
November	3.7	4.6	1.2	(e)1.4	0.7	0.6	0.3	2.0	14.4	39.4
1978 –										
February	4.3	5.4	1.2	(e)1.3	0.7	0.4	0.3	1.9	15.6	43.3
Total –										
1977 –										
May	10.3	14.4	4.6	2.9	2.9	1.4	(e)0.7	2.1	39.3	100.0
August	12.3	14.3	4.7	2.7	3.1	(e)1.3	0.5	2.0	41.0	100.0
November	10.8	13.2	2.8	2.4	3.0	1.6	0.4	2.3	36.4	100.0
1978 –										
February	11.5	13.1	2.7	2.3	2.3	1.2	0.5	2.4	36.0	100.0
Manufacturing (c) –										
1977 –										
May	3.5	5.5	*	0.7	0.6	*	(f)	(f)	11.4	29.1
August	(e)5.0	4.2	(e)1.0	1.0	(e)0.5	(e)0.2	(f)	(f)	12.0	29.3
November	2.3	4.8	(e)0.2	0.6	*	*	(f)	(f)	9.3	25.5
1978 –										
February	2.7	5.0	(e)0.3	(e)0.7	0.4	0.2	(f)	(f)	9.4	26.1
Other industries (d) –										
1977 –										
May	6.8	8.9	3.7	2.2	2.4	1.1	(f)	(f)	27.9	71.0
August	7.3	10.2	3.7	1.7	2.6	(e)1.1	(f)	(f)	29.0	70.7
November	8.5	8.3	2.6	(e)1.8	2.3	1.1	(f)	(f)	27.1	74.5
1978 –										
February	8.8	8.1	2.4	1.7	1.9	1.0	(f)	(f)	26.6	73.9

**JOB VACANCY RATES (a) (per cent)**

1977 –										
May	0.7	1.2	0.9	0.7	0.9	1.1	(e)2.7	2.4	0.9	
August	0.8	1.2	0.9	0.7	0.9	(e)1.1	1.7	2.4	0.9	
November	0.7	1.1	0.5	0.6	0.9	1.3	1.3	2.7	0.9	
1978 –										
February	0.8	1.1	0.5	0.6	0.7	1.0	2.0	2.9	0.8	

(a) For definitions see paragraphs 7 to 9. (b) See paragraphs 12 and 13. (c) Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC) Division C. (d) ASIC Divisions A to L, excluding Division C (manufacturing), Sub-divisions 01, 02 (agriculture, etc.) and 94 (private households employing staff), and defence forces. (e) Standard error greater than 20 per cent but less than 30 per cent. See paragraph 11. (f) Not available.

\* Subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. † Less than 50.